

Medical Emergency Information

compiled by Dr. Carol K.

1. General guidelines:
 - Prescription medications: Yes ___ No ___
 - Assist devices: Yes ___ No ___
 - Assistance: Yes ___ No ___
 - Documentation: Yes ___ No ___
 - Training: Yes ___ No ___
 - Know name of Harbor Hills Emergency Zone Leader: Yes ___ No ___

2. Emergency kits: Basic contents: Yes ___ No ___ Caveats: CPR breathing barrier – have two (one for kit and one for car), diarrhea meds (use with caution), antibiotics (concern about building resistance and toxicity of expired meds), potassium iodine tablets (prevent thyroid cancer from nuclear radiation), “benign” Tylenol (currently a cause of acute liver failure is Tylenol overuse), aspirin syndrome (do not use with viral illness), cough syrup(not recommended), sunscreen (keep on hand), Benadryl (handy to have for allergies).

3. Basic disasters: environmental – fires, floods (Katrina...a chronic medical emergency), earthquakes, storms (tornados), food supply – these are what basic food supply, first aid and CERT training are for.
 - a. Infectious – non-terrorist - flu, plague, encephalitis, tuberculosis, bacterial (hands/water). Studies have shown that in some 3rd world countries washing hands/sanitation is more effective for health maintenance than building hospitals. Non-vaccinated: polio, measles and the like. Some parents do not vaccinate their children and some people from other countries have not been vaccinated and carry infections. Make sure your family’s vaccinations are up-to-date.

4. Terrorism: The consequences are too significant to ignore. The primary problem is the “lack of public concern to the apocalyptic results of a possible outbreak”. There is a special FBI unit that only deploys for “credible threats”. It has been deployed 400 times since 1996.
 - a. “Great” historical precedents – some still with us
 - b. Bioterrorism – see CDC or AMA sites for an extensive review of types, symptoms; the main ones:
 - a. Botulism – neurotoxin (high in Utah...year’s supply)
 - b. Anthrax – threat high, very hardy, very adherent. Experimental WWII on island off Britain; spores lasted 48 years until formaldehyde and seawater dropped over land to decontaminate. Currently – active spores have been found up to a year later in mailboxes.
 - c. Smallpox – neither gone nor forgotten
 - d. Plague - \$240 – last known mail-order price
 - e. Hemorrhagic fevers – Ebola and others
 - f. Tularemia – one of the most infectious (not contagious) diseases.
 - g. Ricin – 5 labs/year disrupted
 - c. Chemicals – organophosphate pesticide-like compounds which have neurological effects, ie: Sarin, VX. Used in world war and by Iraq & Iran. Gas masks will not work unless they are specifically fitted to you and, of course, leak-proof.

D. Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

- a. Explosives – easy, quick cheap.
- b. Dirty bomb – Potassium iodide not helpful as most injuries from blast and not radioactive isotopes.
- c. Nuclear – blast, radiation injuries are immediate and long-term cancer risks high.

E. Psychological – remember the use of terrorism is “to kill some, injure many and frighten everyone”.

- a. Children/Grandchildren – read American Pediatric and Psychiatric guideline for discussing terrorism/emergencies with children and dealing with post-traumatic stress, which can occur immediately or sometimes not until years afterward.
- b. Group – panic vs. assistance – we will be most helpful to each other if we prepare and have plans to help each other and our communities in an emergency.

QUICK REFERENCE

<u>Threat</u>	<u>Symptoms*</u>	<u>P2P **</u>	<u>Treatment</u>
Anthrax (bacteria)	skin sore Lungs	N N	Antibiotic
Plague (bacteria)	Lungs Skin	Y N	Antibiotic
Tularemia (bacteria)	Lungs Skin	N	Antibiotic
Smallpox (virus)	Skin	Y	Isolate
Ebola (virus)	Skin/Bleed	Y	Isolate
Botulism (bacteria)	Neuro	N	Antitoxin
Ricin (bacteria)	Neuro	N	None
Chemicals VX, Sarin	Neuro	Y Contact	Antidote/wash
Nuclear	GI/Skin	N	Shelter Potassium Iodide

**Symptoms – remember many infections begin with general symptoms of fever, headache, etc. EXCEPT chemical symptoms which are immediate

*P2P = person-to-person